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Alberto RODRIGUEZ VARELA
(Phonetic: rohdREEgehs vahRAYlah)

ARGENTINA

Minister of Justice
(since November 1978)

OFFICE OF
CENTRAL REFERENCE

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Alberto Rodríguez Varela, an attorney and law school professor was named Minister of Justice in November 1978, taking over a ministry that had been controlled by the Air Force since the military government came to power in March 1976. Prior to accepting his current position, Rodríguez Varela had been the attorney general in Buenos Aires province during the governorship of Gen. (ret.) Ibérico Saint Jean. Because of the new Justice Minister's connections with Saint Jean, US officials believe that the Governor will be able to wield increased influence over the administration of President Jorge Videla. Other observers suggest that Rodríguez Varela's appointment was helped along by Minister of Interior Albano Harguindeguy.

As provincial attorney general, Rodríguez Varela played a role in the judicial reform movement currently underway in the province. Just before his appointment as Justice Minister the Argentine press alleged that Rodríguez Varela was the author of a political plan originating in the provincial government of Buenos Aires that would delay a return to constitutional government for another 10 years. Rodríguez Varela issued strong denials to the press about the existence of such a plan and his alleged participation.

Born in 1936, Alberto Rodríguez Varela received a law degree from the Catholic University of Argentina in 1957 and a doctorate in law and social sciences from that university in 1959. He gained practical experience as a law clerk. He has been a

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professor at The Catholic University and the University of Buenos Aires law school. He was dean of the latter from 1971 until 1973, when he resigned in an act of remonstrance against the government of President (1973) Héctor Cámpora and the return to power of the peronists.

Rodríguez Varela is said to be active in conservative Catholic lay organizations. Married to the former Alexina Durrieu, he is the father of seven children.

13 November 1978

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